## 9/21/2009 This Week in Congress

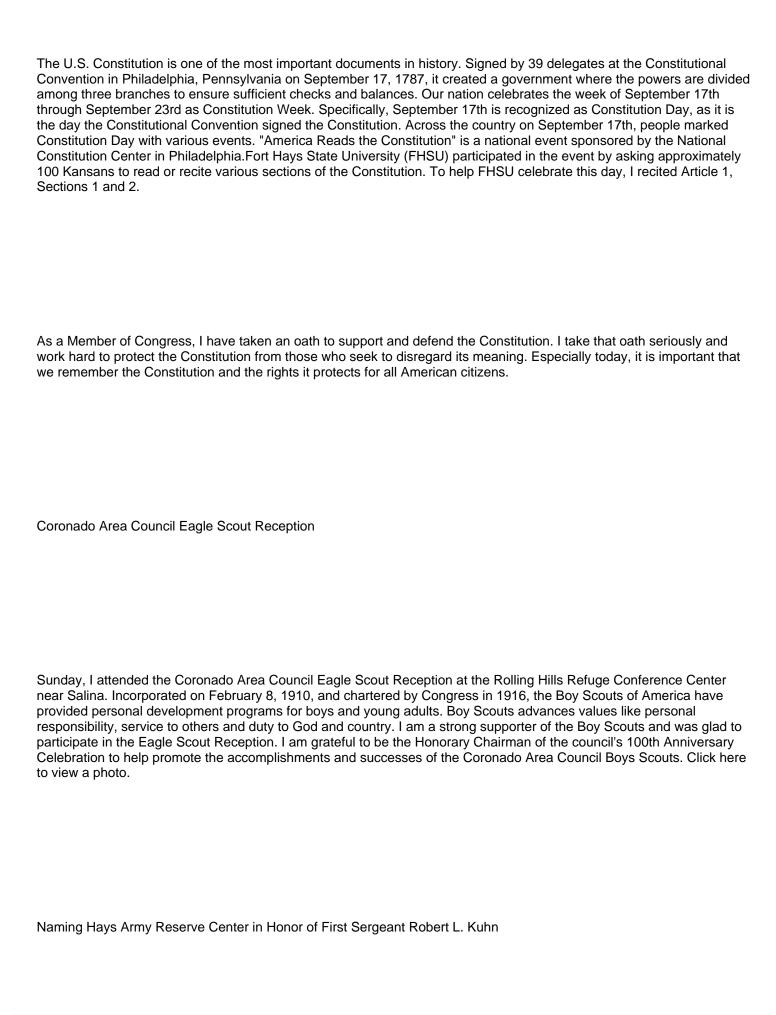
This Week in Congress
September 21, 2009
Dear Friend,
Welcome to "This Week in Congress."
"Czars"
"Czars" are Presidential appointees named to serve as policy advisors or agency heads within the administration. The executive branch has named an increasing number of "czars" since the Nixon Administration. Yet the current administration has named an unprecedented number of these positions in its eight months in power. I have drafted legislation that will formally express Congress' opposition to this process while calling on the President to cease all "czar" appointments. The increasing use of unconfirmed government officials and heads of agencies is a symptom of an ever-expanding Federal bureaucracy. The legislation will pressure President Obama to stop the abuse of this flawed appointment process. It is my hope that this legislation will urge a judicial review of this process by the Supreme Court and lead the court to declare this process unconstitutional.
I have also sponsored legislation that will ban an unconfirmed "czar's" salary from being paid by taxpayer dollars. I will be working towards passage of these pieces of legislation to ensure better accountability and transparency within the government.

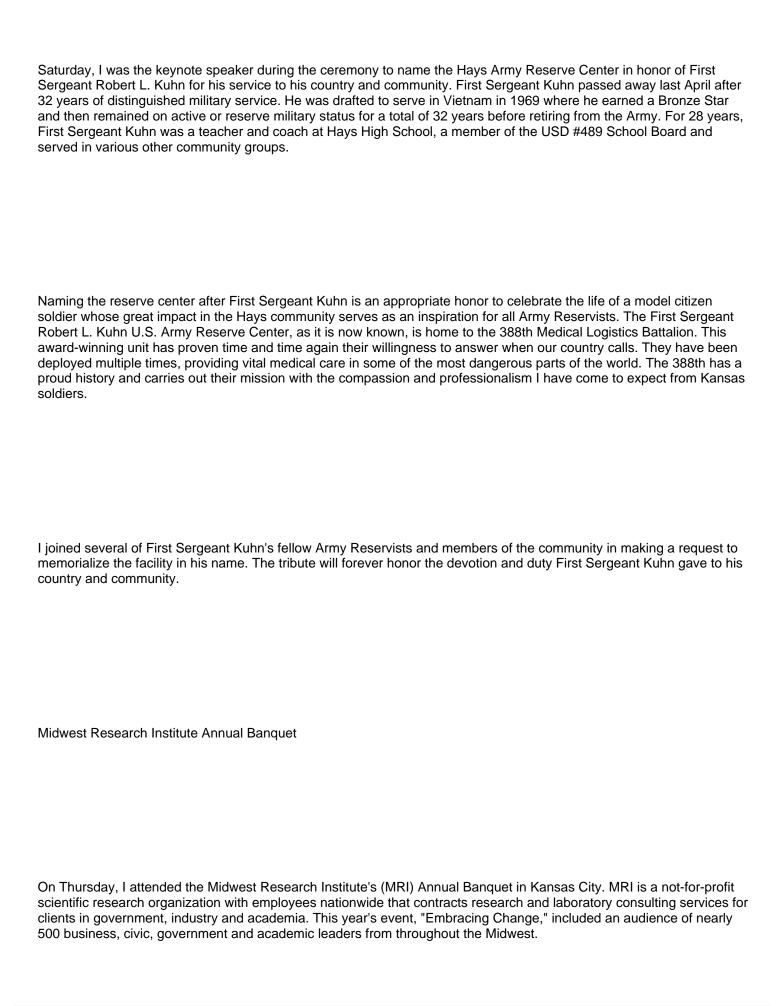
This week, the House passed a resolution I sponsored to recognize the region between Manhattan, Kansas and

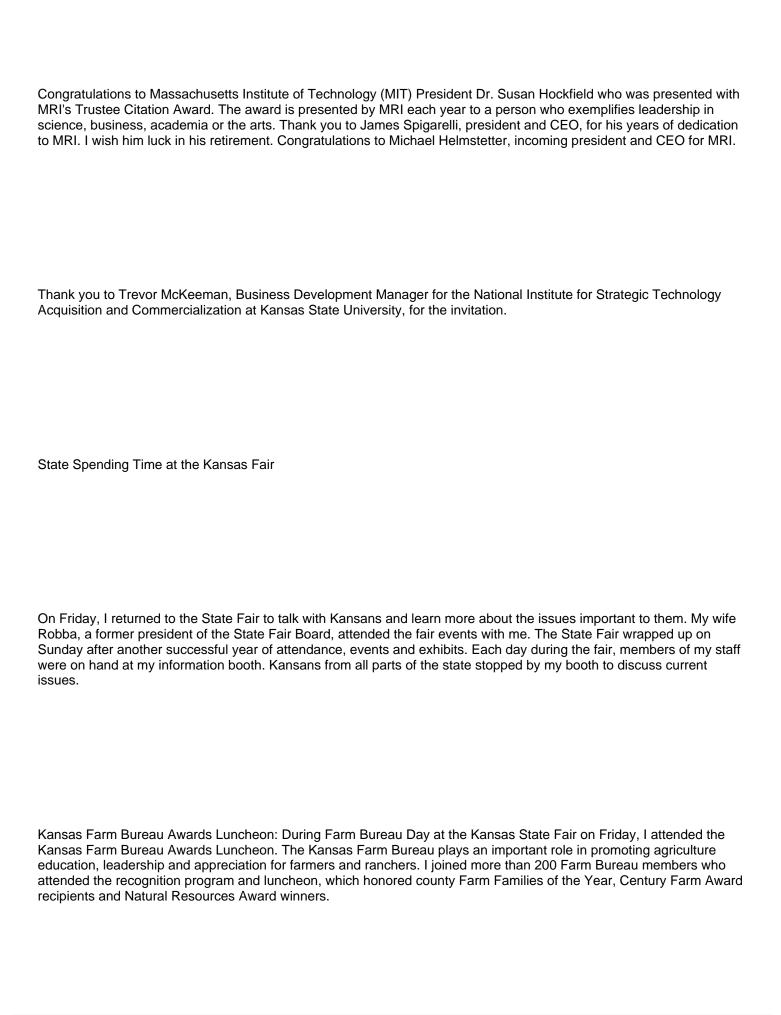
Columbia, Missouri as the Kansas City Animal Health Corridor. This region has long been considered our country's headquarters for animal and bio-science. The animal health industries and universities in the corridor provide tremendous advancements in animal science research that benefit agriculture and consumers nationwide. Click here to view my comments in support of H.Res. 317. Click here to read my comments in support of this resolution.
Iranian Nuclear Threat Demands Action
Days before an American-set deadline that Iran engage in meaningful talks about its nuclear program, the U.S. and five other nations accepted an Iranian invitation to meet on October 1. Yet, Iran indicates it is unwilling to talk about the most important issue, saying discussion of its nuclear program is "finished."
I spoke to the House of Representatives this week about the Iranian threat and the need for sanctions to persuade Iran to change course. A nuclear-armed Iran would threaten the safety of American troops in the region and key allies like Israel; likely embolden terrorist groups Hamas and Hezbollah; and could lead to a dangerous nuclear arms race in the Middle East. The longer we wait to address Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons, the more difficult it becomes to deal with Iran and the world becomes a more dangerous place. Click here to watch my speech.
Agriculture Hearing about Treasury Proposal to Reform Derivatives Market
On Thursday, I participated in a House Agriculture Committee hearing to review the Obama Administration's proposal to impose new regulations on the over-the-counter (OTC) derivatives market. The Agriculture Committee has jurisdiction over commodity futures markets, including most OTC derivatives. The derivatives proposal is part of the Administration's financial regulatory reform package. This was part one of a two-part hearing, the second of which will occur next

businesses that facilitate trades in the OTC markets. Next Tuesday's hearing will include the chairman of the Commodity

Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) and the chairwoman of the Securities Exchange Commission (SEC). It is important to hear from these witnesses as the Agriculture Committee attempts to write legislation in this area.
American Society of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers
I spoke to members of the American Society of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers (ASFMRA) Leadership Institute this week in Washington, D.C. ASFMRA is an organization whose membership collectively manages more than 25 million acres of farm and ranch land for absentee owners, banks and trusts. Each September, the organization holds an annual leadership institute. I was glad to speak to the group about current issues affecting agriculture.
Recent Health Care Editorial
Earlier this week, I read in a Kansas newspaper the suggestion of a simple way to address health care reform - just expand Medicare, the nation's federal insurance program that pays for health care for seniors, to cover more people as the "public option." This idea may appear appealing and certainly seems easier to understand than other proposals currently being pushed in Washington and in the media. However, there are major flaws with this proposal and I do not see how this plan will protect and enhance care for Kansans. Click here to read my full editorial on this issue.
Celebrating Constitution Day

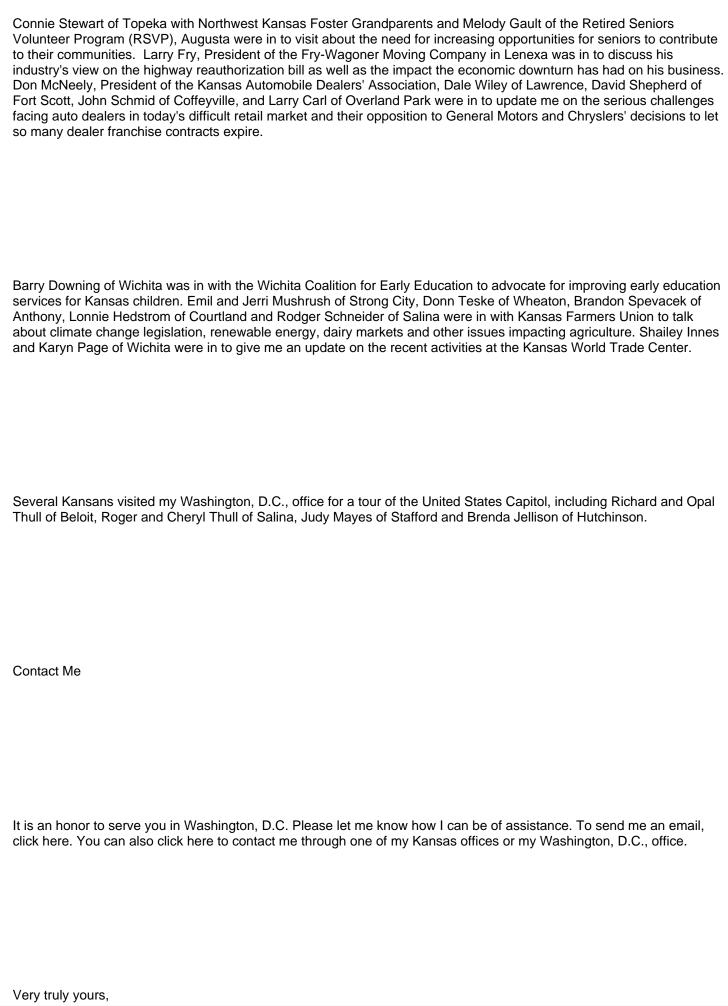






It was a pleasure to hear from keynote speaker Marci Penner, director of the Kansas Sampler Foundation. Marci talked about the unique attractions and special people that make up our rural Kansas communities and how we work together to preserve the places we call home. Thank you to Kansas Farm Bureau President Steve Baccus for his invitation. Click here to view photos from the event.
Fort Riley Soldier of the Year: I enjoyed getting acquainted with Specialist Clancey Henderson, Fort Riley Soldier of the Year. Clancey and his mentor, Staff Sergeant Justin Puls, were at the State Fair volunteering their time at the Geary County Convention and Visitors Bureau booth.
Our men and women in uniform exemplify what is best about America. Congratulations to Clancey on such an impressive honor and to Justin for helping him achieve it. Click here to view a photo.
"Angels in Adoption": While on the fairgrounds, I had the chance to visit with Brandon Hoffman. I nominated Brandon and his wife Melissa for a 2009 "Angels in Adoption" award, which recognizes extraordinary efforts to improve the lives of children through adoption and foster care. Brandon and Melissa most certainly meet the definition of extraordinary. Since 1998, they have adopted seven special needs children who were in the foster care system. In addition to all they have done directly to help children have a permanent family, in 2007 they began a ministry through their church encouraging others to adopt children from foster care. They are also very involved in Special Olympics and other children's activities in the community.
Brandon and Melissa are strong parents who make caring for children their priority. I look forward to formally honoring the Hoffman's at an awards ceremony in Washington, D.C., on September 30, 2009. Click here to view a photo.

In the Office
Robert Barker of Hays was in with the Amputee Coalition of America to explain the importance of providing adequate prosthetic care. David Hornick of Leavenworth was in with the Kansas Health Insurance Association give me an update on providing health insurance to Kansas residents. Sarah Tidwell of Emporia was in with the Kansas State Nurses Association to discuss workforce development initiatives for nurses and other health care providers.
Mike Cook of Hutchinson was in with the Association of Educational Service Agencies to talk about education programs. Judy Lair of Piqua was in with the Southeast Kansas Education Service Center to tell me about innovative education initiatives. Lynn Sparkman of Hays, Carson Johnson of Abilene and Joe Hanson of Atchison were in with the Kansas Association of Christian Schools to brief me on the educational concerns of Christian schools. Genny Nicholas and Maurice Watson of Kansas City, Sandra Lawrence of Leawood and Dallas Polen of Overland Park were in with the Children's Mercy Hospitals and Clinics to express their support for beneficial health care reform for children.
Dee Likes, Matt Teagarden and Jody Wacker of Topeka; Todd Allen of Wichita; Mark Smith of Wallace; Tracy Brunner of Ramona; David Cross of Lewis; Matt Perrier of Eureka; and Brian Hemann of Hugoton were in with the Kansas Livestock Association to discuss transportation, marketing agreements, repeal of the estate tax, the impact of environmental regulations and other issues important to Kansas beef producers. Will and Nancy Schulte of Lakin were in to express their support for the repeal of the estate tax. Mary Ann McLaughlin and Diana Fowler of Hays were in to visit.
Olivia Simmons, Becky Blake and Dick Carter, Jr. of Topeka; Sylvia Rice and Brendon Carr of Salina; Susan Henderson of Lawrence; Karen Hibbard of Manhattan; and Donna Price of Goodland were in with the Travel Industry Association to update me on legislation to promote travel and tourism in the United States. Stan Stark of Haviland, Dave Christiansen of Moundridge and Gregory Runyan of Olathe were in with United Benefits Group to tell me about the importance of pensions to co-op workers.



Jerry